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SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER ON ZIMBABWE PRIOR TO SADC TROIKA  
SUMMIT

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Todd C. Chapman for reasons 1.4 (b + d  
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¶1. (C) On November 5 just hours before the opening in Maputo of the Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Organ on Politics, Defense and Security 'Troika' Summit, the Charge and DATT met with Mozambican Defense Minister Filipe Nyussi at his request to discuss Zimbabwe (and other topics covered septel). Nyussi said that an unusually large delegation from Zimbabwe would attend the meeting, including President Mugabe, Prime Minister Tsvangirai, Defense Minister Mnangagwa, Industry and Commerce Minister Ncube, Vice Prime Minister Mutumbara, and Justice Minister Chinamasa. While Lesotho and Madagascar were also technically on the agenda, Zimbabwe would be the main item discussed.

¶2. (C) Nyussi believed the root problem between the two Zimbabwean leaders was pride and that neither Mugabe nor Tsvangirai knew how to negotiate. He regretted how the ongoing instability in Zimbabwe brought harm to Mozambique and asked for U.S. views on the matter, especially entering the summit. The Charge told Nyussi that the SADC Troika, now under Mozambican leadership, needed to step up and take greater responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the political agreement and to hold all sides accountable. He continued suggesting that Guebuza, as one of the few remaining regional leaders with direct access to Mugabe, needed to influence Mugabe to respect the conditions of the GNU agreement and to create more political space for the MDC. The Charge concluded that many in the USG believed, himself included, that Guebuza needed to be doing more to help in Zimbabwe. Nyussi responded that he thought his President was indeed speaking plainly with Mugabe, but that Mugabe simply would not listen.

¶3. (C) Whatever happened, Nyussi said, Mugabe would require that he appear to emerge as the victor in any negotiations. The Charge responded that the Troika, therefore, needed to be creative in devising a manner for Mugabe to be perceived as winning by sharing power as envisioned in the agreement and deliberately withdrawing himself step-by-step from Zimbabwe's political scene over time. Concluding with a one-on-one time with Nyussi, the Charge reiterated that Guebuza needed to take advantage of this moment to be bolder and more forceful with Mugabe, as faith in Guebuza's abilities to be constructive in Zimbabwe was dwindling. Nyussi replied that it was complicated but that he would be meeting with Mnangagwa to review possible options, since he was not sure that many people were actually reaching Mugabe with correct information.

¶4. (C) Comment: Nyussi, usually straightforward and jovial in meetings, was more serious and focused on seeking input entering today's summit meeting, perhaps feeling more responsibility for the outcome as Mozambique is both host and Troika president. He seemed to believe that there would be

more intense negotiations this time by virtue of the number in the Zimbabwean delegation and the increasing frustration of SADC members, including Mozambique, with the inability of the Zimbabweans to work things out for themselves. The official SADC program has scheduled a press conference to read the official communique for nine p.m. local time, though journalists here already report that this time may slip. End Comment.

CHAPMAN